

Appendix A
Burlington School District
Truancy Prevention/Attendance Procedures
Updated August 2001

Responsibilities

Parents/guardians: Will notify the school, in writing, in advance of a student's absence, wherever possible.

School principal / attendance officer: Shall determine if it is a valid absence and attempt to contact a parent or guardian by telephone to confirm the cause of absence. However, it is the parent/guardian's responsibility to notify the school in advance if the student is going to be absent. An absence will be considered unexcused unless the school hears from the parent. Inability by the school's attendance officer or his/her designee to reach the parent does not alter the absence being unexcused.

Building administrator: shall be notified daily of student absences.

School: Shall annually document the cumulative absences on each student, as the number of absences will determine the thresholds for intervention as described in these procedures.

5 Days Absent

- After 5 cumulative absences during any school year, the building administrator or designee shall make reasonable attempts to make telephone or personal contact with the parent/guardian to inquire about excessive absences.
- If appropriate, support services shall be offered (e.g. social work, guidance, student assistance program services).
- This contact will be followed up with the 5-day absence form letter, which outlines the consequences for subsequent absences and the warning of the possible prosecution for truancy.
- If telephone or personal contact is not successfully made, the 5 day absences letter will still be sent to the parents/guardians.
- The building administrator or designee will maintain documentation of all oral and written contacts regarding absences for each student. Such documentation may be used to support any filings pertaining to truancy, child in needs of care and supervision, or other matters.

10 Days Absent

- After 10 cumulative absences during any school year, the building administrator shall again make contact with the parents/guardians, preferably in person, to inquire about the excessive absences.
- If appropriate, support services shall be offered (e.g. social work, guidance, student assistance program services).
- The parent/guardian must be reminded of the consequences for subsequent absences and the warning of the possible prosecution for truancy.
- This contact shall be documented and put in the student's truancy file.

15 Days Absent

- After 15 cumulative absences during any school year, the building administrator shall require that the parent/guardian attend a school conference attended by representatives from the school, including school resource officers where appropriate.
- The conference may also be attended by the Chittenden County's State's Attorney's Office, SRS, and other appropriate community or independent resources as deemed appropriate by the school. This meeting may be facilitated by an independent/neutral person.
- The student's absences will be addressed and a plan that may include supportive services such as prevention, diagnostic, intervention, and remedial services, alternative programs and other school and community resources will be developed for ensuring the student's future attendance.
- A person will be identified who will follow-up with the family and student as to any problems they have following through on the plan as outlined.
- The conference shall be followed up by a letter which outlines the plan agreed to for the student to return to school, and of the action to be taken or home visit if the student has subsequent absences as outlined in these procedures. A copy of the letter will also be sent to the Superintendent of Schools.
- **Parent/guardian do not attend 15-day meeting**
 - If the parent/guardian fails to attend the conference, the school resource officer or other school personnel will make a home visit or other contact with the parent/guardian.
 - If the school resource officer or other school personnel determines that there was no valid reason for missing the conference, an affidavit regarding the absences will immediately be filed by the school with the Chittenden County State's Attorney's Office and a copy will be sent to the Superintendent of Schools. The Chittenden County State's Attorney can pursue the matter as truancy or as a child in need of care and supervision.

20 or More Days Absent

- After 20 cumulative absences during any school year but before 30 cumulative absences, the school will, at its discretion based on its dealings with the student and parents/guardian, file an affidavit concerning the absences with the Chittenden County's State's Attorney's Office.
- The building administrator shall notify the parent/guardian that the filing has been made with the Chittenden County State's Attorney's Office and the possibility of criminal prosecution for truancy or a petition to determine if the student is a child in need of care and supervision.
- The court could determine that the child is in need of care or supervision under 33 V.S.A. §§5517 and 5528 could potentially result in loss of custody as the most serious consequence.